

REMARKS

The Office Action and citations have been carefully considered. The relevant issues raised in the explanatory part of the Office Action are traversed and addressed below with reference to the headings appearing therein.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC 112

Claim 6 is amended by the deletion of "secondary", so that the claim now refers properly to its intended antecedent, the "rigidity reducing arrangements" identified in claim 1.

It is observed that this amendment would remove the distinction between claim 6 and the group of claims 1-3 which formed the basis of the election requirement as to these groups of claims. The Examiner's comments are respectfully solicited as to the effect of this on the continued prosecution of this application, particularly in the light of the basis on which the anticipation objections are traversed below.

As to claim 8 it is respectfully submitted that this claim, so far as concerns the "said at least one receiving zone" finds a clear antecedent in claim 1, which refers to the step of "demarcating at least one receiving zone for an integrated circuit".

Claim Rejections – 35 USC 102

The citations have been carefully read, and the claims rejections under 35 USC 102 are respectfully traversed.

Root is not concerned with the issues which lead to the present invention, namely the effect of thermal strain with increasing density of chip arrays, but rather with the manufacture of chip carrier arrays which are prepared for separation into individual chip carriers after attachment of chips to the array. Root therefore has no requirement for the creation of rigidity-reducing arrangements and indeed does not disclose such arrangements.

It is therefore not surprising that claim 6 cannot in fact, be read onto the arrangement described in Root. Claim 1, to which claim 6 is appended, requires

- (a) the demarcation of at least one receiving zone, and
- (b) demarcating island-defining portions arranged about the receiving zones, and

(c) creating rigidity-reducing arrangements *between neighbouring island-defining portions*.

It is the step of providing rigidity-reducing arrangements between the island-defining portions which characterises the present invention, by providing the flexibility which reduces the problems which arise from thermal strain.

When one seeks to identify the integers of claim 6 as appended to claim 1 as listed above, in the chip carrier array described by Root, one can identify the receiving zones as the “carrier regions” 23, and island defining portions as the “slots” 15. . In our respectful submission, however, there is nothing in the Root arrangement which corresponds to or even suggests rigidity-reducing arrangements between neighbouring slots. The Root arrangement is therefore fails to disclose an essential characteristic of the present method.

The same considerations apply in respect of the rejection of claims 8 and 9, in view of the distinguishing feature of the invention being found in Claim 1 to which these claims are appended.

Akram is cited under paragraph (e) of USC 102. We believe it unnecessary in this case to address the issue of the relationship between the filing date of the citation and applicant’s date of invention, since in our respectful submission Akram does not describe the subject invention.

Again as discussed in relation to Root, Akram does not address the provision of rigidity reduction, and provides no description or suggestion of the step of creating rigidity-reducing arrangements between neighbouring island-defining portions. The silence of Akram on this point is, in our respectful submission, conclusive of the issue.

CONCLUSION

In the light of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the objections have been successfully traversed and overcome. Favourable reconsideration is therefore earnestly solicited.

Very respectfully,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the claims

Claim 6 has been amended as follows:

6. (Amended) The method of claim 1 which includes creating the [secondary] rigidity-reducing arrangements by etching through the substrate.